

Third, we will want to foster respect for international norms in the areas of human rights and the environment. This will be particularly important in our relationship with China.

Fourth, we will continue to seek economic openness, including securing sea lanes of communication. A decision looms before the Senate on whether to extend permanent normal Trade Relations to China.

I support PNTR for China, in part because I believe it is an essential ingredient of an overall strategy which secures a place for us in more prosperous and economically integrated East Asia.

For all of these objectives, maintenance of robust U.S. military capabilities, forward deployed in the region, will be essential, although the composition of those forces is likely to change as their roles and missions evolve. Our forward-deployed forces and the maintenance of strong strategic airlift capabilities at home enable us to respond swiftly and effectively to regional contingencies, humanitarian disasters, and political instability which might impact our vital interests.

Mr. President, as I said at the outset, I think we may be witnessing something extraordinary underway in Northeast Asia. We don't know exactly how it is all going to play out. But we had best begin now to discuss the potential implications. The decisions we make today will shape the strategic environment and the tools we have to advance our interests in East Asia tomorrow.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the tragedy that is gun violence.

On May 21, 1998, 15 year-old Kip Kinkel walked into Thurston High School in Springfield, OR and opened fire with a semiautomatic rifle in a crowded cafeteria, killing two classmates and wounding two others. Kinkel had been arrested the day before the shooting for bringing a gun to school. However, police decided that he was not a threat and released him to his parents. The next morning, Kip Kinkel shot his parents to death at home before he went to school and opened fire on his classmates.

The entire state of Oregon went into shock. The Mayor of Springfield called upon lawmakers to institute a mandatory detention period for students caught bringing guns to school. In response, Senator GORDON SMITH and I introduced S. 2169, a bill that would provide a 25 percent increase in juvenile justice prevention funds to those states that implemented a 72-hour detention period for any student who brought a gun to school.

The idea behind the bill is straightforward. If a student brings a gun to school, he or she must be removed from the school and moved to a secure place

where the student can be evaluated and the community protected.

A month later, on July 23, 1999 Senator SMITH and I offered a modified version of S. 2169 as an amendment to the Senate Commerce-Justice-State Appropriations bill. The "24 Hour Rapid Response for Kids who Bring a Gun to School," amendment passed unanimously. Unfortunately, conservative House members, with close ties to the National Rifle Association, objected to any so called "gun measures" on the bill, and the amendment was removed.

On May 19, 1999, Senators SMITH, HATCH, and I teamed up to offer a revised version of the 24-hour Rapid Response amendment to S. 254, the Juvenile Justice bill. The amendment was accepted by the bill managers. Sadly, the bill has languished in the Conference Committee since that time.

Consequently, I have offered the 24-hour Rapid Response amendment on S. 1134, the Education Savings Act and S. 2, the Educational Opportunities Act, and will continue to offer it until such time that schools are safe for all our children. This is not about guns. It's about safety.

Since this amendment has not been enacted and because the legislation that would give law enforcement the tools to stop gun violence have been stalled, I come to the floor today to continue reading the names of those who fallen to gun violence.

Following are the names of some of the people who were killed by gunfire one year ago today, June 22, 1999:

Sean Atkins, 33, Baltimore, MD; Cedric Biglow, 22, Oklahoma City, OK; Michael A. Clifton, 35, Chicago, IL; Dredunn Cooper, 20, Houston, TX; Max Johnson, 28, Dallas, TX; Willie Ray Lewis, 23, New Orleans, LA; Rico Mosley, 19, Atlanta, GA; Richard Neely, 75, Chicago, IL; James Edward Shea, 75, Cape Coral, FL; Steve Taylor, 25, Philadelphia, PA; Joel A. Thompson, 20, Chicago, IL; Michael Williams, Atlanta, GA; Marduke Jones, Detroit, MI

NATIONAL EARLY LITERACY SCREENING INITIATIVE

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, recently, the National Reading Panel submitted its report to Congress. That report shows the best current research on how children learn to read. One of the significant studies included in the research is the product of the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. The research actually began as a result of the 1985 Health Research Extension Act which charged NICHD with the research task of finding out why children have trouble learning to read.

The U.S. Department of Education reports a 42% increase in the number of students with specific learning disabilities receiving special education services over the past decade, with 2.7 million students ages 6-21 currently being served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As many as 90 percent of these students have signifi-

cant, if not primary, special education needs in the area of reading.

In the NICHD study, one of the most important discoveries was that 90-95% of those children with reading difficulties could be on track with their peers by third grade if they are identified at an early age and given the appropriate training. And that, Mr. President, is the greatest step we can make toward successful learning for these children.

Currently, there is no readily available, scientifically based, easy-to-use screening tool to test children for reading readiness skills. And, there is no coordinated effort for parents and other early care providers to identify children who show signs of early literacy difficulties and to provide them research-based information and support.

The National Center for Learning Disabilities has recently completed a plan to provide parents, early childhood professionals, and other care providers with an easy to use early literacy screening tool, access to information about the critical importance of early oral language and literacy experiences, and resources that will inform and enhance early instruction and learning. The Report to the House-passed version of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill includes a recommendation that NICHD fund this initiative.

I hope that as we work through the differences in this bill, adequate funds will be provided to NICHD to fund the National Early Literacy Screening Initiative.

NOMINATION OF EDWARD GNEHM, JR. FOR AMBASSADOR OF AUSTRALIA

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, this is truly one of the highlights of my Senate career, an instant replay memory I will recall and cherish for a long time to come. For today I was able to read and have approved the nomination of my college roommate to serve as Ambassador. It's something we would have never dreamed we would be a part of back in the days when we were rooming together just down the street from the United States Capitol at George Washington University.

I first met Edward Gnehm, Jr., or "Skip" as everyone has come to know him, years ago and we quickly became friends. In fact, Skip was my fraternity brother and he is the only brother that I have ever had—of any kind—in my life. He was my roommate for three years and he's been my friend ever since. As I hit the books and studied about accounting and business, he was working on learning the nuances of International Relations in the hope that it would help him become a career Ambassador for the United States of America. I watched him work and dedicate his every waking moment to his dream. You can't help but be inspired by someone who has that kind of dedication. He was a brilliant guy, but he